



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 169

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023

No. 58

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Savior, lead us today as a shepherd. Guide our lives and inspire our hearts. May the talents gathered here on Capitol Hill help in the awesome task of bringing healing to our Nation and world. Strengthen our lawmakers as they deal with unattended needs and unsolved problems. Make them eager to lift burdens and ready to respond in service to humanity. Lord, help each of us to feel a bit of the responsibility for the challenges that hang heavy over our land. In Your unfailing love, give us the wisdom to follow the leading of Your powerful providence. We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 30, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK,

a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. SCHUMER. First, on our work period recap, well, 66 to 30, that is the final count of yesterday's vote to repeal the Iraq AUMF of 2002 and 1991, a bipartisan success years in the making. That was a very good moment here on the floor yesterday—a sign that Senators on both sides want to see bipartisanship continue in this Chamber.

We can see it again if Members work together on issues that Americans care about, like lowering costs, preserving America's competitiveness, and in yesterday's case, stopping endless wars in the Middle East.

It is my hope that the AUMF repeal can be a model, a blueprint for how the Senate operates in the coming years. It is not easy, but it is very much possible, and I thank my Republican colleagues, particularly Senator YOUNG, for their cooperation.

The AUMF repeal was the conclusion of a successful busy work period—5-week work period that we just completed in the Senate—a busy and successful work period on and off the floor.

We confirmed another 14 highly qualified judicial nominees to lifetime

appointments to the bench, 13 district and one circuit court judge, bringing our total to 119 new judges—119 new judges; that makes us proud—under President Biden.

I also want to recognize our committee chairs for their good work over the past month or so in holding hearing after hearing, day after day, on important issues that Americans care about, like rail safety, the health of our banks, the rights of working Americans, the President's budget, and more.

The Senate will hit the ground running when we return from the April State work period by taking up the much needed Fire Grants and Safety Act. It is my hope that yesterday's 96–0 vote in favor of moving forward portends for swift action and argues very strongly against dilatory tactics. Let's do the same thing we did on the AUMF. We are willing to allow some amendments, but we have got to move forward. This is something that is supported broadly, as shown by the 96–0 vote.

Just this week, 29 fire emergency service groups warned Congress that with summer around the corner, local fire departments of all kinds are woefully understaffed, underfunded, and underequipped to meet their obligations to keep people safe. So, when we return, the Senate must move quickly to pass fire grants legislation without unnecessary delays to this overwhelmingly bipartisan legislation.

MILITARY PROMOTIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the Senator from Alabama's holding up military nominations, the Senator from Alabama continues his hold on—more than 180 now—promotions, military promotions, blatantly ignoring the many warnings of the harm he is causing to our national security. It is reckless. It is just reckless.

Yesterday, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin warned that blocking

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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